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January 28, 2009

Thomas S. Burack, Chairman
Site Evaluation Committee
New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
29 Hazen Drive, Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095

Subject: Re: Application of Granite Reliable Power, LLC, Docket No. 2008-04

Dear Chairman Burack:

As a resident of Coos County, I would like to express my opinion about the application submitted by Granite Reliable Power to construct an industrial wind farm in the Phillips Brook area of Coos County.

Let me begin by stating that I am not against wind-generated power as part of an overall energy strategy. More specifically, I am in favor of it when (among other things) facilities are sited appropriately. By "appropriately" I mean locations that (1) don't conflict with people's homes and quality of life and (2) don't degrade critical and fragile wildlife habitats.

In the case of people's homes, I am familiar with the wind farm erected in Mars Hill, ME that has caused nearby homeowners great distress and anguish. The construction of such a large facility within earshot of pre-existing homes was an avoidable mistake. However, the desire to "go green", the lure of what turned out to be overstated tax revenues for the town, and an unrealistically rosy scenario painted by the developer resulted in a decision that ended badly for those unfortunate citizens. That decision changed their lives permanently and not for the better.

As for wildlife habitats, I have read pre-filed testimonies by both GRP's consultants (Stantec) and the NH Fish & Game Department's wildlife biologists. While the Stantec consultants generally downplay the negative impacts of this facility on wildlife, our state biologists strongly disagree and conclude, "*As proposed the project will have a severe and unmitigated impact on the natural environment.*" Their testimony also states that "*45% of the potential habitat for this species (Bicknell's thrush) **in the world** is found in New Hampshire.*"

The Stantec testimony addressed the Bicknell's thrush issue in this way: "*Indirect impacts to breeding birds are expected to vary based on the habitat needs of individual species; those associated with forest interior habitats will be affected more, and those associated with edge or disturbed habitats will be less affected. To date little is known about habitat impacts to breeding birds from the development of wind projects because very few post construction studies have been conducted to address these impacts. We anticipate some impacts to ridgeline breeding habitats due to the limited amount of*

disturbance that have occurred in the past. However, the numbers of species that specifically utilize the summit habitats were documented to be low."

The Fish & Game biologists' positions on this issue are clear and unambiguous. The Stantec testimony is quite the opposite. In addition, the testimonies of three scientists submitted to your committee on Jan. 5, 2009 by the Counsel for the Public characterize the Stantec study as incomplete, its assessment of environmental impact as understated, its proposed mitigation plans inadequate, while clearly supporting the position of our state biologists.

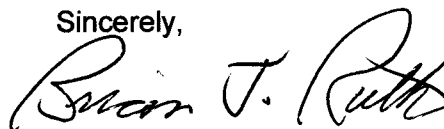
Coos County is a relatively small jewel of land and water blessed with natural beauty and resourceful people. Most of us likely live here because we appreciate the lifestyle the region affords us. But, Coos' limited area is just what makes it vulnerable to the effects of wind farm development, including the attendant power transmission lines that will fragment the same forest tracts that wildlife depend upon for survival. The most vulnerable appear to be the high-elevation forests...just the location wind farm developers prefer for their towers. In short, it won't take much to permanently alter and degrade what makes Coos most special.

While I suspect this applicant's proposed site is not within close proximity to homes, I am taking this opportunity to request that your committee be mindful of this concern when you evaluate future applications. As for locating these facilities in areas where threatened and special concern species will be further pressured and jeopardized, I ask that you act responsibly on behalf of creatures who can't speak for themselves.

In closing, I respectfully request that the SEC members and others in our government resist the urge to rush into actions that will forever change the character of Coos County. While it may be tempting to take swift well-intended action, please consider carefully all short- and long-term factors before moving ahead. Do the benefits outweigh the drawbacks? Are we enriching a few at the expense of many? Are we maximizing permanent job creation for our residents? In the future, will hindsight show that we made prudent decisions for the region and its inhabitants, human and animal alike? As citizens of Coos County, our future way of life rests with the decisions you folks make. I sincerely hope your wisdom and courage lead you to the right conclusions.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian J. Ruth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Brian" being more prominent than the last name "Ruth".

Brian J. Ruth

cc: Rep. Evalyn Merrick
Rep. Scott Merrick